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- ART. III. — 1. *Report of Mr. THOMAS BUTLER KING, from the Committee on Naval Affairs, July 7th, 1841.* Printed by Order of the House of Representatives. pp. 22. Report Number Three. Twenty-seventh Congress, First Session. House of Representatives.
2. *Letter from the Secretary of the Navy, transmitting Copies of Proceedings of the Naval Courts-Martial, in the Cases of Commander Smoot, and Lieutenants Sharpe and Stallings.* January 30th, 1841. Document Number Eighty-six. Twenty-sixth Congress, Second Session. House of Representatives. Navy Department.
3. *An Epitome Historical, Statistical, and Descriptive of the Royal Naval Service of England.* By E. MILES, with the Assistance of Lieutenant LAWFORD MILES, R. N., &c. London: Ackermann & Co. 1841. pp. 184. 8vo.
4. *The Ports, Arsenals, and Dock-Yards of France.* By A Traveller. London: James Fraser. 1841. pp. 299. 8vo.

WE heartily congratulate the country upon the prompt attention of Congress to a subject, the vital importance of which we urged in the last Number of this Journal; we mean that of a "Home Squadron." We accept with the highest gratification this testimony of the purpose of the present administration to guard the country hereafter from those well-founded alarms, which, in a consideration of our defenceless condition, and the causes and prospect of a war with Great Britain, may well have caused us to "eat our meal in fear, and sleep in the affliction of terrible dreams."

This measure was not only necessary to the repose and security, but to the honor of the country. If another such report as that of the last winter's session should come from a Committee on Foreign Affairs, it may make us appear intemperate, but whilst we have a squadron for Home Service, we shall escape the charge of utter fool-hardiness.

Mr. King, in his admirable state paper, as well as in the speech which accompanied and supported it, has set forth in forcible language the urgent necessity for self-protection; and as this subject cannot be too frequently considered, we shall transfer to our pages such passages from the "Report" as

appear to us most worthy of public attention. We do this the more readily, because we believe the force as yet provided to be altogether too small for the object. Mr. Adams well said, that twenty steam-vessels would be better than two. We hope to see the squadron increased, not only in the number of the steam-vessels, but by the addition of some of those noble ships of the line, of which the Ohio has lately afforded us such a handsome specimen.

“The changes,” says Mr. King, “which the introduction of steam power has already effected, and is constantly producing in the naval armaments of the maritime powers of Europe, evidently require the most prompt and efficient action on the part of the government of the United States to meet this new and powerful auxiliary in naval warfare, by so changing the construction, and employment of our navy, as most effectually to protect our commerce, and guard our sea-coast against the sudden approach of an enemy employing this new and formidable description of force ; and it is the opinion of the Committee that no measure is more imperiously demanded by every consideration of prudence and safety than that recommended in the Report of the Secretary, — the employment of a Home Squadron composed in part of armed steamers. He very justly remarks, that, had a war with Great Britain been the result, as was at one time feared, of the subjects of difficulty now in the course of adjustment between that power and the United States, not only would our trade have been liable to great interruption, and our merchants to great losses abroad, but a naval force, comparatively small, might on our very shores have seized our merchant ships, and insulted our flag, without suitable means of resistance or immediate retaliation being at the command of the government. To guard against such a result, to be ever ready to repel, or promptly to chastise aggression on our own shores, it is necessary that a *powerful* squadron should be kept afloat at home. This measure is recommended by other considerations. There is no situation in which greater skill or seamanship can be exercised and acquired, than on the coast of the United States ; and in no service would our officers and seamen become more thoroughly initiated in all that is necessary for the national defence and glory. In that service, aided by the coast survey now in progress, a thorough acquaintance would be gained with our own sea-coast, extensive, and hitherto but imperfectly known ; the various ports would be visited, the bays, inlets, and harbours carefully examined ; the uses to which each could be made available during war, either for escape, defence, or annoyance, be ascertained, and the confidence resulting from

perfect knowledge would give us, what we ought surely to possess, a decided advantage over an enemy on our own shores."

This view of Mr. Badger is appropriately designated by Mr. King as "excellent and comprehensive." We confess that we read it with something like surprise. We have seen in time past so much of ignorance or indifference in the head of the Navy Department, that we were startled with its energy of tone, and fulness of thought. We already hail Mr. Badger as the leader under whose commanding efforts we are to welcome home again our discarded faith in this "right and left arm of the country."

Mr. King in his "Report" has noticed the danger to which the Southern coast is exposed in the event of a war with England, from a sudden incursion of the black regiments from Jamaica.

"In the event of a war with Great Britain," he says, "the fortifications at Pensacola, and perhaps others, might be seized and held by the enemy, or any of our unprotected harbours might be entered by fleets of armed steamers, loaded with black troops from the West Indies, to annoy and plunder the country. There are, it is said, ten thousand black troops in the British West Indies; and that orders have been issued to increase the number to twenty-five thousand. These troops are disciplined and commanded by white officers, and, no doubt, designed to form a most important portion in the force to be employed in any future contest that may arise between Great Britain and the United States; and by a reference to the map of the West India mail lines, it will be seen that in our present defenceless condition, a force composed of armed steamers and troops of that description, would not only give great annoyance to our coast, but most effectually, and at once, put a stop to all communication round Cape Florida, or through the passes of the West Indies to or from the Gulf of Mexico; and consequently the commerce of the great valley of the Mississippi must fall into the hands of the enemy, or its vast productions, cut off from market, be rendered useless."

We have discussed this matter in the article alluded to above. We cannot pretermit any occasion, however, of insisting upon its claim to immediate and effectual attention. Any measures in reference to it must originate with southern members; and we pray God that they may realize its moment in time to save our common country from this appalling peril.

They will then adopt the opinion of the Committee, that “a powerful squadron has become as necessary for our protection at home, as the employment of our ships of war has hitherto been, or may hereafter be, for the protection of our flag and commerce abroad.” It is well said that Great Britain finds in her colonies an argument for a large military marine to which we have no parallel. But where these colonies are so situated as to threaten our coast, to provide a rendezvous for her blockading fleets, and to supply her with the means of a fatal assault upon a portion of these States, they furnish as strong a reason to us for a large naval force to prevent their coöperation with the mother country, as they do to Great Britain for protection. Whilst, therefore, we express our great satisfaction that the bill for the Home Squadron has passed, we must repeat our declaration, that the force provided is altogether too small for the object. It would hardly be sufficient for the protection of any one point; so extended is our line of sea-coast that an attack in a distant part would be determined before the squadron could hasten to its assistance. The security of our northern ports, and a careful and unremitting watch over the long line of southern frontier must be two distinct objects. The latter, we do not hesitate to say, is far the most important. But to make provision for either, no expense is too great, no diligence can be spared. Accordingly we urge upon the attention of the Honorable Secretary the suggestion of Mr. King, that “this squadron ought, from time to time, to be increased as the means placed at the command of the Department may permit, and the various objects connected with it, as pointed out in the report of the Secretary, may best be promoted and attained.”

The Report of the Committee on Naval Affairs enters largely into a consideration of the changes in maritime warfare which are likely to result from the introduction of steam into our own and foreign navies, and points out the great additions which England is making to her navy by the establishment of the Royal Mail steam-packets.

“France,” we are informed too, “is pursuing a course of policy in every respect similar to that of Great Britain. The last official register of her navy shows that she then had thirty-seven armed steamers, carrying heavy guns, equal in all respects, if not superior to those of any other nation. The sudden appearance of one of them some years since in the harbour of

Baltimore must be recollected by all. A law has recently been enacted, authorizing the government to establish a line of armed steamers from Havre to New York, on the plan of the British West India mail line. And, surprising as it may seem, a number of gentlemen in Boston have actually sent in proposals to take the contract, if *that* city, instead of New York, shall be inserted in it. Thus, it will be seen that our own merchants, driven by the laws of trade and intercourse, are about throwing the whole weight of their skill, enterprise, and capital into the hands of one of our great maritime rivals, for want of proper encouragement and action on the part of their own government ; and that the humiliating spectacle is likely to be presented of American merchants, who have excelled all others in commercial pursuits, being employed to support a naval force which may be directed against the cities in which they reside."

The " Report " closes with the following resolution ;

" *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Navy is hereby directed to inquire into the expediency of aiding individuals or companies in the establishment of lines of armed steamers between some of our principal northern and southern ports, and to foreign ports ; to advertise for proposals for the establishment of such lines as he may deem most important and practicable, and report to this House at the next session of Congress."

Congress will certainly not neglect to follow up this measure with all the energy, and perseverance which the importance of the subject imperiously demands. It has become a question not only of self-defence, but of national prosperity. Commercial enterprise and capital are about to be diverted from their natural channel in this country, and applied to swell the triumph of a rival. It has always been felt to be a mortification that the English people, after having so long yielded to the superior skill and daring of the merchants of the United States, shown in their monopoly of the packet trade between Europe and America, should at length have gained an ascendancy by originating the establishment of a line of steam communication. For this, however, there was an explanation in the fact, that the English by their position were the first to acquire the requisite knowledge and practice in the conduct of steam-vessels for sea-navigation. It is impossible for them to launch a vessel except upon the open sea. If then, they used steam, it must be upon bottoms fitted to navigate the ocean. We, on the contrary, found an ample field for the application of

this new power in our great lakes, and rivers, and inland seas, where, without exposure to the storms of the open ocean, stability, buoyancy, and capacity, might be, and were, sacrificed to speed. Our steam-vessels, accordingly, are the fleetest in the world, but are wanting in the qualities of a good sea-boat. But when the intelligence of the merchants and mechanics of the country is turned to the study of the subject, we may hope to take our former position as leaders in the intercourse between the United States and Europe ; a position which was so easily assumed, and has been so steadily maintained, that it may be called without exaggeration our natural and proper place.

The course is open to us now for a new trial. It seems to be admitted by general consent, that a line of steam-packets is called for between New York or Boston, and Havre. We learn from the work of "A Traveller," of which we have given the title above, that the project has been entertained both at Antwerp and Havre ; that at the latter place it was "resolved, at every risk, to go on with the speculation commenced under the name of the 'Havre Transatlantic Steam Company'"; and that the English capitalists "who are shareholders in the company, with that good sense and energy which generally distinguish them, determined, in conjunction with some spirited Frenchmen, that it was a question of 'now or never,' the more especially if Belgium were allowed to have the start in the race of competition." We trust this interesting subject will receive such timely attention at home, as will save us from the mortification and the reproach of seeing a French flag flying on board of a Havre steam-packet in any of our harbours. But the government of the country are especially bound by every consideration of policy and duty to lend their pecuniary aid to foster these enterprises, which will place at their disposal such a naval force, as, together with the regular military marine, will suffice for the protection of the country. A million of dollars expended annually in this way will put the President in command of a force which it would cost ten times that sum to construct and keep in efficient repair.

Fourteen mail and packet steam-ships could, at this expense, be engaged in the service of the government in the event of a war, and that too without the annual charge of repairs, manning, victualling, &c. But even this sum would probably be reimbursed in a short time. The London "Journal of Com-

merce" says ; " Under the old packet system between Falmouth and Halifax by the gun brigs, the expense to Government was about forty thousand pounds sterling, annually, more than the receipts of postage. By the line of Cunard's steam-ships a balance of twenty thousand pounds appears already on the credit side of the Atlantic mails." The Post Office Department may eventually discover a new source of revenue in the armed steam-ships which will protect our sea-coast.

We cannot insist too strongly upon the primary duty of self-defence ; and what, we ask, have we to oppose to the formidable array of steam-frigates, and other vessels which our great rivals England and France can bring against us ? We learn from the "*contract whereby the mails to the West India Islands are to be carried by steam-navigation,*" that the company agree to provide

" A sufficient number (not less than fourteen) of good, substantial, and efficient steam-vessels, of such construction and strength as to be fit, and able to carry guns of the largest calibre now used on board of Her Majesty's steam-vessels of war, each of such vessels to be always supplied with first-rate appropriate steam-engines, of not less than four hundred collective horse-power ; and also a sufficient number, not less than four, of good, substantial, and efficient sailing-vessels of not less than one hundred tons burden each ; all such steam and sailing vessels always to be supplied and furnished with all necessary and proper apparel, furniture, stores, tackle, boats, fuel, oil, tallow, provisions, anchors, cables, fire-pumps and other proper means of extinguishing fire, and whatever else may be requisite and necessary for equipping such vessels, and rendering them constantly efficient for the service hereby contracted to be performed, and also manned with competent officers, and a sufficient crew of able seamen, and other men ; and all the said steam-vessels to be likewise manned, and supplied with competent and efficient engineers, machinery, and engines ; and to be in all respects as to vessels, engines, equipments, engineers, officers, and crew, subject to the approval of the said commissioners and of such persons as shall at any time, and from time to time, have authority under the said commissioners to inspect and examine the same."—*Return to an Order of the Honorable the House of Commons, dated 22d May, 1840.*

Here we find at once the stimulus to exertion, and the precedent for its direction. We can have no commercial or domestic security until we follow the example which Eng-



land has set us. In considering the present defenceless state of the country our attention has been called to the condition of its navy yards. The facts developed in Miles's "Epitome of the Royal Naval Service of England," and "The Ports, Arsenal, and Dock Yards of France, by a Traveller," render us acutely sensible to their deplorable want of system, and their deficiency in naval and other stores. The accounts of Deptford, Woolwich, Plymouth, and Portsmouth, of Brest, Rochefort, and Toulon, remind us by painful contrast how much we have yet to do. Such is the abundant supply of materials, ordnance, and stores of all descriptions in these *dépôts*, that an order to fit a ship for sea may be carried into immediate execution from their own resources. The outfits in the various departments for vessels of all classes are prepared to go on board at the shortest notice, whilst we take it upon ourselves to say, that the smallest vessel in the United States navy cannot be fitted for sea at any one of our naval stations, without having recourse to the stores of the neighbouring city. We suffer great losses too from the want of a sufficient system, losses which might be saved to the nation if a competent and responsible officer were placed at the head of each department of duty, who should give receipts for the numerous articles returned into store by ships arriving from foreign stations, and should be held strictly accountable for their safe-keeping and future disbursement. It is desirable that the master-mechanics of the yards should be permanently connected with the navy by receiving fixed salaries, and warrants from the President. By this means the best talent would not only be engaged, but secured to the navy by a tie which could not easily be broken at the caprice of individuals, or for political offences against the party in power. If a war were to take place, there are few respects in which an enlargement of the present means and conveniences of our naval stations would not be necessary. But these defects are better known to the officers commanding these stations than to ourselves. We merely point to the matter as one worthy to engage the attention of the navy department.

We have no room for any extracts from the letters of "A Traveller," but in the perusal of the book we have been struck with nothing so much as the perfect system with which every thing is conducted in the French "Ports, Arsenal, and Dock Yards," and the wise provision made in all the various

departments of the navy for future emergencies. In these things we may profit by good example. Hitherto we have contented ourselves too much with providing for the demands of the time. A more comprehensive policy is to be recommended ; one that will embrace the possible wants of the navy when the occasion shall arrive for launching and putting in commission every vessel of war that is now on the stocks. The " Epitome of the Royal Naval Service of England " affords an evidence of the great popularity of the British navy, not only in its details, but in its typographical execution. It is embellished, in the style of an *annual*, with colored engravings of vessels of all rates and classes, and interspersed with appropriate poetical quotations easily found in the English writers of all times, to whom the sea and the navy have ever proved rich themes of song.

" The Main ! The Main !  
Is Britain's reign ;  
Her pride, her glory, is her fleet."

From it we take the following table of interesting statistics. It has already appeared in the newspapers of the day, but we would give it a more durable place here for the convenience of future reference.

Rate of vessel.	First Rate, Second Rate, Third Rate, Frigate 4th Rate, Frigate 5th Rate, Sixth Rate, Brig, Schooner, Cutter,
Tons.	3000 2625 2300 2082 1468 800 382 183 161
Guns.	120 92 72 50 42 26 16 6 10
Weight of broadside in pounds.	2028 1682 1224 872 708 376 226 30 30
Number of men on a peace establishment.	886 645 540 395 280 210 115 40 40
Number of men required to build her in twelve months.	160 122½ 97 69 60¼ 35¼ 22¼ 10¼ 8¼
Hours time in which twenty men will rig her.	300 285 285 260 230 140 105 80 30
Weight of officers, men, and their effects on board, in tons.	Tons. Cwt. 102 8 78 65 45 27 3 20 14 2
Weight of hull, when launched, in tons.	Tons. Cwt. 2466 18 1882 6 1616 15 1042 12 795 3 698 213 10 109 6 82 7
Weight of all received on board, in tons.	Tons. Cwt. 2142 5 1723 14 1359 11 1067 16 670 9 582 242 18 94 17 76 8
Weight of water displaced, when complete, in tons.	Tons. Cwt. 2142 5 1723 14 1359 11 1067 16 670 9 582 242 18 94 17 76 8
Weight of iron ballast, coals, water, wood, and tanks, in tons.	Tons. Cwt. 883 15 710 508 9 445 8 249 10 211 50 45 38
Cost of materials of the hull, in £ sterling.	93,521 65,279 56,388 36,744 28,163 15,611 8,992 4,605 3,980
Cost of masts, yards, and blocks, in £ sterling.	6878 6503 5656 4611 3153 1509 1136 370 522
Cost of furniture and sea stores, in £ sterling.	16,805 15,114 12,433 9,612 7,952 4,434 3,285 1,380 1,368
Total expense, exclusive of provisions, in £ sterling.	117,199 86,896 76,506 50,867 39,268 21,554 13,413 6,355 5,870
Costs in dollars and cents, rating the £ sterling at \$ 4.44.	520,363.56 335,818.24 339,686.64 225,849.48 174,349.92 95,699.76 59,553.72 28,216.20 26,062.80

The following statement of the navy of Great Britain is from the last official list for October, 1840, as published in Miles's "Epitome," page 37 ;

Ships, &c.	In com- mission.	In ordi- nary.	Build- ing.	Total.	Tons.
Of the line. . . . .	28	54	23	105	466,176
Under that rate, small vessels, &c.	149	220	34	403	
Steam Vessels. . . . .	65	15	7	87	34,056
	242	289	64	595	500,232

"The whole charge for the service of the year ending February, 1841, amounts to £5,659,051. The number of seamen, 24,165. Boys, 2,000. Marines, 9,000. Total, 35,165."

We have sought this opportunity of presenting some considerations upon the present condition of our own navy, and of making some suggestions for its more perfect organization. The field is a wide one, and we by no means expect to occupy it entirely ; but we are bound to say, that we offer our remarks in a spirit of candid inquiry, with an earnest desire to assist the labors of the Navy Department, and to contribute something to the honor and efficiency of this valuable branch of the public service. We need hardly add, that our suggestions will have no other connexion than the subject which is their common basis. It is said, and not we fear without truth, that the discipline of the navy has suffered in common with its other interests from the neglect of late years. There are some unhealthy symptoms apparent to a superficial observer. One of the worst of these, is the want of concert and harmony between the different grades. Cases have recently occurred where junior officers, feeling themselves aggrieved, and having in vain applied to the Department for redress, have been driven finally to appeal to the justice of Congress, or the sympathies of the people. The decisions of courts-martial have justified this appeal, and the fatal consequence has resulted, of a loss of confidence on the part of young officers in those to whom they would naturally look, and ought to look, for protection.

It is suspected, that rank has proved a shield against the penalties of the violated law. An attempt has been made to fix upon the junior officers the calumny, that they are not interested to preserve discipline and proper subordination.

It has been declared from a high place, that publicity in the proceedings of courts-martial impairs their authority, and, what is more strange, that the members of a court are not bound to make up a finding according to the evidence, but are authorized to go beyond the record, and consult their private feelings and opinions.

Some of these pernicious doctrines are set forth in a "Letter from the Secretary of the Navy, transmitting Copies of Proceedings of the Naval Courts-martial in the Cases of Commander Smoot, and Lieutenants Sharpe and Stallings." A few extracts from this letter will suffice as a text for our future remarks.

"With the most unfeigned deference to the assembled representatives of the people of the United States, I would respectfully suggest for their consideration, whether the frequent practice, among officers of the navy, of appealing to Congress, when dissatisfied with the decisions of courts-martial, or the course of the department, is not well calculated to impair that just and salutary authority committed to them by the laws, and the exercise of which seems indispensable to the preservation of discipline and subordination in the service."

It may safely be trusted, that it will never be in the power of any individual, however exalted his station, to withhold from any other, however mean his condition, the right of proper and respectful appeal to the high court of the nation; our comment therefore will rather apply to the spirit than to the effect of this passage. No publicity can impair the just and salutary authority, which is exercised with impartiality. Discipline and subordination are best preserved by the distribution of an equal justice, which has no cause to dread exposure and discussion. So far from fearing the evil anticipated by the late Secretary, we think that nothing can be more conducive to proper subordination than a publication of the proceedings of those tribunals in which the guilty are punished, and the innocent acquitted; — where the good may find encouragement, and the bad warning; which afford precedents, that cannot be too much multiplied, and instruction that cannot be too often repeated. The *public* administration of the laws is a main principle of our government. It is a principle founded on truths, that admit of no exceptions in favor of military rule. Any attempt to give to military courts a secret and inquisitorial character will terminate in the subversion of

their authority, and in the prostration of one of the main pillars of the military system,—the exclusive administration of its own laws.

In the following sentences, “I would respectfully call the attention of Congress to a consideration of the complete contrast between our civil and military codes ; the object of one is to secure equal rights to all, — the other recognises no equality,” the distinction of ranks in a military establishment is confounded with the exercise of judicial power. The assertion, that the military code recognises no equality is, in this connexion, a specious error. It is true, so far as the external condition of the individual is concerned, but erroneous, with regard to the right of that individual to simple and equal justice. We fear that we have before us, clothed in a more seemly garb, a sentiment which was once more common in the service than now, that juniors have no rights. Inferior officers have few privileges, side-boys fewer ; but all have rights, as well as duties, and the first of these is their right to perfect justice in the execution of the laws.

“That there may have been great disparities in the punishments awarded by courts-martial, for offences apparently similar, is very certain. . . . From the intimacy of their association, almost every officer is acquainted with the character and habits of his brother officers from his own personal knowledge. It is not always, therefore, that the decisions of courts-martial are exclusively founded on the testimony given on trial. They are necessarily influenced by this direct personal knowledge ; . . . Hence the records of these tribunals do not always clearly indicate the whole ground upon which their decisions are based.”

In these passages of the late Secretary’s letter, the very singular, and indeed monstrous, doctrine is asserted, that the members of a court-martial are justified in making their private opinions and feelings the basis of their legal decisions ! With this assertion we hardly know how to deal. It is surely not necessary in this community, at this time, seriously to undertake the exposure of its falsehood and evil tendencies ; yet it comes to us from one having authority, and holding a high station ; one, whose instructions are supposed to be such as may be listened to with respect, and relied upon with safety. We must express our wonder, how any man could have had the temerity to stand before the Congress of the United States as the

avowed advocate of such an abominable heresy. It may be thought, that it may claim some reasonable palliation from the peculiar constitution of a military court. But we know nothing in the nature or profession of a navy-officer to exempt him from the ignorance, prejudices, and passions, that affect other men, to guard against the operation of which is the final object of the forms and defences of the law. On the contrary, he is more liable, from the very "intimacy of association," to entertain partialities, which, in the situation of a judge, he is called upon to control.

For the late Secretary we entertain a proper respect. We regard him as one of the successful pioneers in our literature. We, and all his countrymen, are indebted to him for amusement. We are happy, moreover, to record the testimony of friends to the purity of his private character, and of all to the unblemished integrity of a long life of useful public service. But we must admit, that he is grievously mistaken in the doctrines he has maintained in this letter. He seems to think that rank alone is to be justified, — that it possesses the privilege of concealment ; and, stranger than all, that it may pronounce its private opinions from the judgment-seat, under the solemn sanction of a judicial oath, razing the sanctuary of justice for ground on which to plant its passions. This is to declare, that

" authority, though it err like others,  
Hath yet a kind of medicine in itself,  
That skins the vice o' the top."

But we feel assured, that, in this country at least, justice, "even-handed justice," justice which is no respecter of persons, is the only secure and permanent basis of discipline, in a military or any other establishment.

The late Secretary has remarked, with great good sense,

" Though composed of different grades, the officers of the navy constitute, in reality, but one body, united in one bond of common interest. To instil into them the opinion, that each separate grade is not only distinct from the other, but, in fact, constitutes an antagonist interest, is to excite jealousies, propagate dissensions, and engender antipathy, which must necessarily destroy all confidence, and eradicate every feeling of brotherhood, among the different classes,— one of which will be looked upon as oppressors, the other as the victims of oppression. No cordial concert of action, or of effort, can be ex-

pected from a body so constituted, the component parts of which bear this relation towards each other."

Yet we fear he is to be especially charged with producing the very evil he deprecates, not only by the injurious opinions he has promulgated, in the passages already cited, but by a further remark, in which he implies, that junior officers have no regard for the preservation of discipline. It will be recollected that there are lieutenants, who have been in the navy twenty-five years, and have attained the age of forty years. Their grey hairs attest their experience. If they do not now understand the interests of the service, (and their own,) they may well be despaired of. This remark is peculiarly unfortunate at the present time, whilst expositions of oppression, corruption, peculation, and brutality, (we are careful of our use of words,) are too recent to be forgotten, and whilst a lieutenant is in command of the most important squadron, which has been fitted out since the last war. We may affirm without the danger of contradiction, that, excepting the distinguished officers of that war, some of the most widely celebrated names are to be found on the list of lieutenants. It may be thought that we are dealing uncharitably with the late Secretary, in forcing him before the public from the retirement of private life, but we have a duty to perform to which personal regards must submit.

If superior officers are justly charged with exhibiting an undue sympathy with rank when it has appeared before them in criminal characters, we can only say, that they are singularly unwise. A severe condemnation of dishonorable practices in one of their own grade, whose situation lessens his accountability, and increases his means of evil, is required by the general good of the service; it is necessary, also, to their own honor. By openly avowing, that they have no lot or part with such men, they will acquit themselves of any participation in corruption, oppression, and cowardice. If any amongst them should entertain the mistaken notion, that, in collisions between officers of different ranks, the superior is in all cases to be sustained; and in doing so, they may claim as a justification, that in wresting the law to their authority they do a little wrong, to do a great right; we will then advise them seriously to consider what we have before affirmed, that no system can endure in this country that wants the vital elements of truth and justice. We invite them to contemplate the



injury that has already accrued to the character and discipline of the navy from exposures and newspaper controversies, which insidious attacks upon character, and high-handed aggression, have rendered unavoidable. We remind them, that, among the junior officers, there are men in the maturity of their powers, respectable in character and influence, who have pledged the deepest stake and most earnest zeal in the cause of the profession. Above all, we heartily beseech them to reflect, that there is a higher duty and responsibility than any which can belong to this false estimate of naval discipline, a responsibility from which some of them, in the course of nature, are not far distant. Time is passing, and the revolving years are constantly taking away something from their exclusive control, and bringing nearer to them in power and place those who are now the subjects of their authority, and whose opinions are hereafter to perpetuate their naval reputation. It remains for them to determine, whether, when they are called upon to leave the profession for ever, they will be attended to their graves with the blessings, or execrations of those, whose happiness, honor, and advancement have so long constituted their momentous trust.

The excessive appointment of midshipmen is about to prove a serious injury to the navy. The number of midshipmen on board the British ships in commission is four hundred and eighty-five (Miles's "Epitome," p. 182). The number of midshipmen on the United States Navy Register, for 1841, is two hundred and sixty-two, to which fifty-five are to be added, the appointments of the late administration between the first of January and the fourth of March, making in all three hundred and seventeen, nearly two-thirds as many as are actually employed in the British navy, whilst the proportion of ships is nearly as one to ten. A fatal consequence of this abuse of patronage is, that the list of passed midshipmen (nearly two hundred in number) is overcharged so far beyond the power of relief from vacancies in the upper ranks, that these gentlemen must attain the age of from twenty-six to thirty years, before they can be promoted. In the mean time, men in stature, age, and experience, they are but little more than boys in professional standing. They belong to a class of officers to which "no particular duties can be assigned." On board ship without a fixed position, or settled duties, they usurp the place of the elder "young gentlemen," depriving

them of useful opportunities of improvement ; suffering from constant pains of "hope deferred," their spirits are broken by delay ; harassed by the necessary restrictions and petty inconveniences belonging to their station, though ill-suited to their matured minds and characters, they are fretted into insubordination of language and conduct. Their knowledge and skill deteriorate from disuse ; the eager and high-swelling ambition of youth is gradually exchanged for the despondency arising from long-continued disappointment ; and when at length, at the late age of twenty-eight years, the tardy commission by which they pass from official boyhood to manhood arrives, it finds them utterly indifferent to an honor which, at twenty-two, would have seemed the consummation of happiness.

If this evil be not arrested in time, the *young* lieutenants will be men advanced in years, who, by the ordinary duration of human life, cannot live to be captains. Not only do individuals suffer, but, what is a more important consideration, the country and the navy suffer. The present body of passed midshipmen are hereafter to become the high and responsible officers of the service. Their long delay in their present rank is, as we have truly described it, a most unfortunate part of their early education. Their love of the profession, their *esprit de corps*, their habits of industry and subordination, their knowledge and means of usefulness, their ambition, and finally their faith and hope, the spurs to generous exertion, are weakened and blunted. From too long a continuance in humble rank, from habitual submission to the will of others, people come at last to lose the power of self-reliance, of thinking and acting for themselves. Unaccustomed to responsibility, they are unfitted to assume the tone and authority of command. The ready and palpable remedy for this evil, which, we believe, we have not exaggerated, is promotion, and that, haply, the expected increase of the navy will prescribe. The preventive to its future recurrence is a discreet and conscientious exercise of the appointing power. We see no reason, indeed, why midshipmen should be admitted, except as vacancies (in all the grades) occur.

The experience of this country is enforcing the idea, confirmed by the practice of foreign navies, that a *Retired List* is an indispensable appendage to every military establishment. The active and arduous nature of military duties requires health,

strength, and physical perfection ; its solemn responsibilities equally demand intellectual energy and moral correctness. Accident, disease, the vices incident to the profession, and the unresisted temptations of power produce occasional instances of entire disqualification ; and in order that the country may know its effective force, that merit may not be overlaid by worthlessness, that individuals may not be rewarded for services which they are unable or unwilling to perform, that the influence of bad example may be suspended, in fine, that justice, both to the servants and to the country that employs them may be preserved, some mode of distinction must be adopted. A chosen mode of distinction in the English and French marines is a Retired List. In the former, of the commanders, "the first fifty on the list have the option of retiring with the rank of captain," and of the lieutenants, "the first hundred on the list have the option of retiring with the rank of commander," at one rate of pay, and "the next three hundred on the list may retire with the rank of commander," at another rate of pay (Miles's "Epitome," p. 119). A bill has lately passed the French Chambers, fixing the ages at which officers of the various grades from Admiral will take their places on the retired list. The bill not being at hand, we will not venture to quote from memory its exact provisions. We by no means bring forward these statements as precedents to be strictly followed. They afford, however, a powerful argument in favor of a retired list, as the result of matured experience in navies older than our own.

This is a measure which can only originate at the department with any appearance of propriety, or chance of success. The invidious task of making selections is a part neither of our duty nor pleasure. Even the rule of distinction is so delicate a subject that we may hardly hope to treat it with satisfaction. We will, therefore, refer it again to the Honorable Secretary, the head of judgment in the Navy, the independent agent, whose position commands perfect information concerning the characters and qualifications of officers, and, whilst it makes him accountable to the state for the well-being of the service, removes him from any necessary participation in the passions, prejudices, and partialities of its members. Commodore Perry, as we are informed by Mr. Slidell Mackenzie in his Biography, copied into his note-book the following passage from Vattel ; "A man, who, by great application, has

enabled himself to become useful to his country, or he who has performed some signal service to the state, may justly complain if the prince overlooks him in order to advance useless men without merit." There is frequent occasion for applying this sentiment in the navy, when age and accidental position on the list are above all talent, all virtue, all deeds. We are not prepared at present to advance the principle of promotion by merit ; a principle, which, though attended in its operation with formidable difficulties, strict justice and the best interests of the state distinctly recommend. In time of war, it will secure its own recognition. But a retired list will in some measure counteract the blind disregard of merit which follows upon promotion by seniority, that mechanical system, which recompenses the worthless, and retards the meritorious ; which awards to idleness and industry, to tameness and ambition, the same meed ; which gives the hire of the laborer, who has borne the burden and heat of the day, to him who has stood all the day idle in the market-place.

The English maxim (and English naval maxims are precious) is, "Old men for admirals, and young men for captains." We cannot act up to the letter of the latter part. But, that we may partly fulfil its spirit, we must insist upon the right and duty of selection for commands being exercised by the department. An officer who has been suspended for corruption, who has been removed from his post for peculation, or who is notorious for drunkenness, or the brutal treatment of seamen, is incapable of performing the duties of a command, and is unworthy to represent abroad the American name and character.

It is desirable to provide for the useful occupation of as many officers as possible, in order that a sufficient number may be retained to meet the exigency of manning the whole fleet. We accordingly suggest that officers may be profitably employed at the head of the different departments in navy-yards, as naval store-keepers at the several stations, as instructors (following the example of the Academy at West Point) of the midshipmen, as secretaries to the commanders-in-chief, as is the excellent custom in the French military marine, and on revenue service when it shall be transferred to the direction of the Navy Department.

We think that the complement of officers on board of some ships might be advantageously increased. The English un-

derstand a truth, of which every day's naval experience furnishes abundant testimony, that officers are the soul of a ship. The flag-ship *President*, of fifty guns, on the South American station, has ten lieutenants. The flag-ship *Melville*, of seventy-two guns, in the East Indies, (the seat of war,) has nine lieutenants. On the lakes, the *Niagara*, of twenty guns only, has six; on the North American station, the *Winchester*, of fifty guns, has eight lieutenants; and on the Mediterranean station, the flag-ship *Princess Charlotte*, of one hundred and four guns, has eighteen lieutenants! ("British Navy List," January, 1841, pp. 73, 74, 76, 84.)

The organization of an ordnance corps, with an office at Washington, and proper officers, commanders or lieutenants, and gunners, at the different yards, exclusively devoted to this duty, is loudly called for by the vital necessity of having every thing relating to the great-guns, small-arms, ammunition, signals, and gunner's stores, on board of every ship, in a perfect condition. We will merely state as a lemma to this proposition, that the *Ohio* performed her late cruise in the Mediterranean with *flint* locks. The honor of the nation, the great interests of commerce, and the business accumulating from the progress of the coast-survey demand the establishment of a bureau of hydrography, where all the information connected with the navigation of the seas, and particularly with the knowledge of our own shores may be collected and preserved, and whence authentic charts may be issued for the use of the mercantile and military mariner. The geodesic operations conducted by Mr. Hassler,\* eminent both as an engineer and a

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\* The mention of this gentleman's name reminds us of the obligations which science acknowledges to him, in this country and abroad. He has been engaged in Europe in several distinguished scientific operations, and, amongst others, (if we are not mistaken,) in the measurement of a degree of a meridian, by Méchain and Delambre, in 1790-1805. In 1826 he contributed to mathematical science a work on the "Elements of Trigonometry, Plane and Spherical," of which it is sufficient praise to say that it met the highest approbation of Dr. Bowditch. The treatise is not only complete, but philosophical. It affords in its analytic form of expression an appropriate introduction to the study of physics, and in the number and convenient tabular arrangement of its formulæ, which to the higher student have the merit and utility of definitions, a fertility of resources only surpassed by Delambre, in his treatise on Spherics, in the 10th chapter of his "*Astronomie théorique et pratique*." The question has been asked, if no native American could be found to superintend the great work with which Mr. Hassler is at present occupied. It would be enough to say, that national distinctions in science are invidious. But we may add, that if any American is capable of directing this task, he has been qualified by the instructions of Mr. Hassler; and further that Mr. Hassler is the only gentleman who can command the confi-

theorist, with such signal advantage to the scientific character of this country in Europe, and which are redeeming us from the disgrace of depending upon English surveys for the navigation of our own maritime frontier, would form an adequate commencement for the labors of this office. The government owe this tribute to commerce, the principal source of the revenue of this country.

We pass over these important subjects in haste, to allow ourselves space for some remarks on the enlistment and mode of treatment of seamen, in relation to which we submit the following suggestions.

1. The service of seamen might be dated from a certain fixed day of the year on which they enter, without reference to the exact period of enlistment. The object of this is to have the terms of service of whole crews expire on the same day. Then the period necessary for a return of a ship to the United States will be pointed out; the jealousies and discontents arising from one part of a crew's being discharged, whilst another part is retained, will be avoided; the crew will look forward to the same moment of expiration of service, with uniform expectation; and the whole question of discharge, with all the difficulties growing out of the gradual breaking up of a ship's company abroad, will be adjusted.

2. The present regulations prevent the admission of young men between sixteen and twenty-one years of age, as interfering with the apprentices. The door should be freely opened, and every encouragement offered to all such persons (who are mostly Americans) to enlist.

3. Men who have once served a term in the navy, and sustained good characters, are entitled to readmittance. Instances occur of their being rejected from various causes. A man by the name of White, an excellent seaman, who performed the late cruise of the *Razée* Independence, was turned away from the New York rendezvous because he was not twenty-one years of age. We mention this merely as an illustration. We do not propose to dispense with the medical examination. But if a man has suffered an injury in the

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dence of the scientific, we mean the *whole* scientific community. The slowness of the progress of the coast-survey, as of all great and durable undertakings, is commensurate with its vast importance. To estimate justly either the one or the other, it is essential to comprehend something of the profound science, mature skill, and elaborate method indispensable to its successful execution. See, on this subject, the *North American Review*, Vol. XLII. p. 75, *et seq.*

public service, he should be taken again ; and, if the injury is such as to require medical treatment and disqualify him for duty, he should be sent (at his own request and without pay) to a naval hospital.

4. Contracts with seamen ought to be strictly fulfilled, particularly respecting discharges. They have (not to mince the phrase) been most frequently and shamelessly violated. Seamen are jealous of their rare but precious liberty. They should be induced to entertain confidence in the government, to feel as Americans. Let there be no appearance of a desire to break faith, and escape from agreements, a strict fulfilment of which is rigorously exacted from the weaker party. Then the moment of discharge will not be regarded as one of happy escape from prison. We must express our suspicion that five years may be considered too long a time of engagement. Seamen are a short-sighted race, and not prepared to look forward so far. One term of enlistment is also preferable to two. If the above course were pursued, and the periods of service were dated from the first day of the sixth month, then a plan might be adopted of fitting out ships for foreign stations in the summer and autumn, and of ordering them home in the spring and summer. Their return would help to supply the necessary crews. Seamen would all receive their discharges at the same time, would be at home in a season better fitted for their enjoyment, would be properly provided for during the severe winters, and would come at last to understand that this was an established routine.

5. When men are discharged, their discharges might run in such a way as still to attach them to the navy ; specifying, that if they presented themselves, within two or three months, at any rendezvous, receiving-ship, or station, home or foreign, they should be entitled to be reëntered, to be borne on the books at their former rates, named in the discharges, and receive pay for the intermediate months as if they had continued on duty ; provided always, that they were in a good personal condition, and possessed a supply of clothing such as is required of a new recruit.

This pay for the intervening months of absence would correspond to the bounty at present allowed, with this difference, that it would be given to tried servants of the navy instead of strangers. This plan would cost no more than the present bounty ; men-of-war would be recognised as the permanent home of seamen ; the men would be picked,

and sifted by numerous trials ; they and the officers would become well acquainted ; and the former, like the latter, would consider themselves attached to the service for life.

6. Discharges ought to particularize the characters and qualifications of men ; they should be of two kinds, one of which may be distinguished as the *honorable discharge*, and should be put upon good, durable paper. No man should be readmitted into the service unless he produced the honorable discharge. It is an object plainly to give character to the service, and to let the service give character to those who engage in it, in the humble rank of seamen.

7. The importance of confirming petty officers, and keeping them always in their rates, cannot be too strongly urged. They never should be disgraced except for disability or misconduct. Now a man may perform one cruise as a petty officer in a ship of the line, and the next in a sloop-of-war as a seaman. He has no security for continuing in his former situation. Petty officers might be advantageously divided into classes, as boatswain's mates, gunner's mates, &c., in the first class ; quarter-masters, quarter-gunners, &c., in the second class ; captains of the tops, &c., in the third class. This will multiply promotions, and supply a field for the ambition of the apprentices. They should be borne on the books according to classes, and then they may be promiscuously employed in the different duties of the class to which they belong. This classification would become a useful addition to the systematic economy of a man-of-war, and afford convenience in transfers.

*Lastly.* We propose a separate office (bureau) of enlistment, to attend to the manifold details of this system, and to record the names and descriptive lists of those who have received honorable discharges.

It is full time that systematic effort was made to ameliorate the condition of seamen in the navy. The humanity of the times demands that their mess economy should be improved, and that the spirit ration, the hateful source of all insubordination, should be abolished, and tea and coffee substituted in its stead. In the English navy the seaman receives a portion of his monthly pay, at regular intervals ; it would be well if the practice were adopted into the American navy, and if the men were permitted to go on shore more frequently, so that they might learn to use this indulgence with discretion, and be treated, in this respect, with something of the same



confidence as officers. They would then enjoy their hard-earned pay, which is now, in great part, pilfered from them by the rapacious "land-sharks." If we were going to treat the subject of discipline, we should enlarge upon the necessity of introducing a system of rewards as well as punishments, and of relieving the seamen from a course of government wholly founded upon the debasing principle of fear. If his calling has its besetting sins, it has also its appropriate virtues ; some attention to the cultivation of the latter would evince humanity, as well as wisdom.\* But we will pass suddenly from the lowest to the highest grades of the profession. We have before had occasion to treat at some length the creation of Admirals, a measure without which, every effort towards the perfect organization of the Navy will be, if not fruitless, at least attended with only partial success. A single fact, pregnant with meaning, has since come to our knowledge, which may well be added in illustration of our remarks. In a case of appeal made by a lieutenant, the commodore of a station found it necessary to reverse the decision of the captain commanding his flag-ship. The latter officer replied to the order of the commodore, that he was his equal in rank, and might therefore decline obedience. If experience and example can teach, we may here profit by their instruction.

Something has been heard of opposition to promotion, and to an increase of force, in the navy itself. It is so manifestly to the advantage of all, that every thing should be done to multiply the general means of usefulness, that the suspicion would seem to refute itself. A lieutenant can hardly be imagined to cherish an envious dislike to promotions, for they favor his own grade ; and a captain as little, for they enhance the honor and dignity of his station. The humblest boy in the service can enjoy no melioration in his condition, whether moral or physical, but that the good redounds to the credit of all above him. We may suppose, however, that there are minds unable to grasp a comprehensive scheme of general

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\* In 1825, Captain Matthew C. Perry submitted to the Department, through Commodore Rodgers, a plan for the introduction of apprentices into the navy. The system has since been adopted, and, fostered by the judicious care of Mr. Paulding, it promises to supply the country with a body of seamen, superior in education and moral character to men of the same class to be found in any navy, or army, in the world. Our suggestions and observations are not intended to apply to these, but to the seamen admitted into the navy, in the ordinary manner, through the rendezvous.

improvement ; whose petty vigilance extends only to details. Whilst they preserve the silence becoming their insignificance, and are content to receive with gratitude the benefit resulting from the exertions of others, they are harmless. But, if any active traitor is found in the ranks, — and reflection warns us that no service is altogether exempt from them, — let it be the duty of every one to point him out, that the general voice may proclaim his infamy.

In what has been said upon the present condition of the navy, or suggested for its improvement, we are not aware of having advanced any thing that is novel, any thing that has not been discussed in naval circles. In fact, we have omitted to notice a striking feature, — the active and inquiring tone of mind in all ranks of the profession. There is a universal conviction, that something must be done to build up the defence on which alone the country can depend in time of need, to give it a better organization and a more extended usefulness, to make it more worthy of the public reliance, and to provide, as far as possible, a security against its future neglect. It has been our desire in some degree, to embody this sentiment, which cannot be safely disregarded, and to collect, and put into form, useful information and ideas. If, unfortunately, there should be any men in civil or military stations, whose opinions derive weight from their authority, and who are opposed to progress in the navy, either on account of personal jealousies, or from a fear of innovation, we would admonish them, that “ it is the part of wise legislators and military men, to watch and study the modification and changes which have gradually developed themselves in the character, and conduct, and *feelings* of those under them, bearing always more or less resemblance to the changes going on in society around them, and therefore commanding the countenance and influence of this public opinion. To conform to this in time, is to direct the change, and not yield to it, — is retreating without discovery to take up a stronger position. In this way may be retained the highest degree of discipline and subordination, which the character of our people, and the nature of our institutions, will admit ; — to attempt to stem the natural current is the sure way to be overwhelmed by it.”

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